by many curious examples.

The very day before that fixed for my

departure I was wandering aimlessly through the little town of Biskra, when chance—the detective's good fortune, rather

-took me into an Arab caravanseral on the outskirts near where the road comes in from Touggourt and El Wayla, the farthes:

Following the direction of his signal I

saw two young people flying apart with a haste that showed they were doing wrong. It was the old, old story; love was not running smoothly, and the chief obstacle was, no doubt, this stalwart female in the

man's red beret who had just entered th

"Surely, it is time, prince," I said, accosting him at once in English—"time that this masquerade should end? I come from

upon an ancient name!"

frequently fail to under-stand that these are but

ious cosmet-

(Copyright 1807, S. S. McClure Co.)

Written for the Evening Sigr.

The firm of Black & Brightsmith was good enough to express its great and grateful appreciation of my help in the case of the Escondida mine. It promised me other work of the same kind, plenty, if I cared to take it up, and soon sent to ask whether I could undertake a confidential mission to Algeria

It was to convey a considerable sum of money in specie to the remote town of Biskra, a health resort of growing popularity, situated in the far-off desert, almost on the confines of the great Sahara.

The money is to be paid over in exchange for a certain compromising document, one that closely affects the honor and character of a great family. Will you

go?" said Harry Brightsmith. I expressed my reactness, but asked why the sum could not be paid by check.

"The demand is for gold. In any case, we wish to secure the papers in full acquittance, and this can best-can only-be worthy agent, some one who will, if neces-sary, give and take at one and the same

"If necessary?" I inquired, catching at the doubt implied. "We have no absolute certainty, Mac. that the demand is justified, that the case is bona fide, and not trumped up for the extertion of blackmail. This is another and still stronger reason for our applica-tion to you. If you can only find that there has been any foul play anywhere. you will earn the eternal gratitude of his lighness as well as a handsome douceur. Wait. Let me tell you the whole stery. "You have heard of the Medeas? They

"You have heard of the Medeas? They were once a reigning house, and may some day come to the throne again. Meanwhile, Prince Casimir de Medea lives in great re-tirement on the Thames, and his eldest sen, Stanislas, who has come to man's es-tate, has been sent round the world to complete his education, with a Cook ticket,

"Prince Stanislas is said to be a lively youth, fond of horses, sport, amusement, the fair sex—all that makes life enjoyable at twenty-two. He has cost his highable at twenty-two. He has cost his highness a good deal of money at times, but
his father has paid without a murmuruntil row. The present demand—that on
which we seek your co-operation, Macis for the liquidation of a gambling debt
incurred under peculiar—indeed, as it is
alleged, disgraceful circumstances. The
young prince has been accused of a flagrant attempt to correct fortune."
"In plain English, of cheating at cards;"

grant attempt to correct fortune."
"In plain English, of cheating at cards?"
"Nothing less. And on the surface the case seems perfectly clear. The charge of cheating is supported by his own confession, owning up, in so many words, signed by his own hand, and duly atteste!. We have the notarial, authenticated copy in our hands. Here it is. But first read the letter that accompanied it."

the letter that accompanied it."
It was dated from the Hotel des Zibaus-Biskra, and, translated, ran as follows:
"Your Highness—It is our inexpressibly painful task to bring to your highness' notice the deliberately dishonest and disgraceful conduct of your son, Prince Stanislas de Medea. He has been caught cheating at baccarat; caught in the act, flagrantly. This deplorable affair occurred at the Cercle el Saiahin, to which the prince the Cercle el Saiahin, to which the prince was readily admitted on account of his rank and presumed gentlemanly character. "Last night, when engaged in a friendly game, he took the bank with a capital of 2,000 francs, advanced him without question by the gerant of the club. Up to that point he had lost steadily, but now the luck turned. It became phenomenal. At every deal the prince won; he cleared the table. For quite an hour this lasted, but with a growing suspicion in the minds of several players that all was not well. We set ourselves to watch the prince. I myself was chosen to stand behind him,

and at a given moment, a signal being made, to seize and hold his hands. "I did so, and immediately a pack of cards, concealed somewhere within his cards, concealed somewhere within his paletot, fell to the ground. It was a pack made up chiefly of 'threes' and 'sixes.' If your highness is acquainted with the game of baccarat the capital importance of these numbers will need no explanation.
"Play was stopped and two of us were deputed to draw up a proces-verbal de-

scribing the occurrence.
"Of course the prince's gains were declared null and void, and he was called tpon to make restitution, also to pay his previous losses and the advance made by the gerant. These amounted in all to 7,507 francs, and, as he had no funds, I dis-charged the debt, taking his acknowledg-

"We also prepared for your son's signature a confession of his misconduct, a copy of which, duly certified by a notary, is now inclosed. The original will be sur-rendered to your sen or to any person you may name on one condition, that you hand over in exchange a sum of 25,000 francs, to be applied for the relief of the poor Arabs in this oasis.

"We think that your highness will see e wisdom of meeting us fairly and comptly. It can hardly be your wish that a Prince de Medea, the direct heir to that a Prince de Medea, the direct neir to your ancient name and future holder of the high fortune that may some day return to your noble house, should be exposed as a cheat, branded as a blackguard, throughout the civilized world. It is only out of consideration to your highness that we spare him the ignominy he so richly

'Conceiving that your highness would wish to avoid all publicity, we consent to receive the moneys claimed in gold. If your highness' representative will meet ours in Algiers on the 2id of November at ours in Algiers on the 25d of November at midday in the Jardin Marengo, near the Esplanade Babel Oned, the exchange can be completed. Let him seat himself on the seventh bench from the main en-trance and wear a white hat. Unless he is alone no steps will be taken to meet him.
"The slightest suspicion of bad faith, or your failure to comply with the conditions

given on the date fixed, will cause the ab-sclute rupture of all negotiations, and the proces-verbal, the confession, with full particulars, shall be published in the press of every capital of Furne. of every capital of Europe.
"We are, with profound respect and the assurance of our deep and abiding sym pathy, your highness' servants, "Phillidor de Fivas,

"Anatole Mirabel.

The confession, which was full and explicit, bore the prince's signature, the at-testation of the witnesses thereto, and the



"The Scal, Yes. The Signature, No." words "copie corforme," with the seal and signature of the notary public, "La Ramie (Paul), Place de la Sahara, Biskra." "Do you believe in all this?" I at once asked the partners, Black and Bright-

"It rings rather false," said Harry. "But the facts are precise, and Prince Casimir, who is our client, takes the very gloomiest view of the situation. He has heard noth-

THE MISSING PRINCE

that have turned up pretty regularly—at least, until six weeks ago—has had no idea of his whereabouts. We rather think he distrusts his son, or, at least, is so furiously angry at the scandal that he will not look at the case caimly."

"What is he like, this young prince? Good sort? Bad lot? Which?"

"Frankly, I am on his side. Black here" (Black was a tail, solemn chap, preternaturally and prematurely grave, with slow voice and drooping eyelids) "has been rather against him.

"No, no; not quite that," protested Black; "but I have thought him too frivolous and fond of pleasure. Not sufficiently alive to

"but I have thought him too frivolous and fond of pleasure. Not sufficiently alive to the obligation of noblesse oblige."

"Well, anyhow, there is an element of doubt," I said. "It seems highly improbable that a young prince just out of his teems is a professional Greek, skilled in dirty tricks with the cards. That, on the face of it, first. Then the fact that Prince Casimir has heard nothing direct from his son—no appeal, no apology, no attempted son—no appeal, no apology, no attempted exculpation. This rather tells in the lad's favor, I think. If I am asked, I should say, Don't pay—not, at least, till the story is verified."

"His highness will not run that risk. He insists upon the money being sent out, and every stipulation fulfilled to the letter. It drives him wild, the idea of a Medea posted as a cheat through Europe," answered

He was a striking personage in his way; tall, of commanding presence, a soldier tefore everything, a military dandy in the best sense, always spick and span, in the whitest of shirt cuffs, the smariest and most perfectly fitting uniform; he was also a man of the world. Consigned now by the chances of a military service to this remote, but important post, he kept himself abreast of all that went on in Paris, indeed in Europe. For the English he expressed a warm and genuine liking, based on pleasant days spent and pleasant friendship made when military attache to the French embassy in London.

Now he received me with great cordiality; but when he had heard my whole story, he shook his head with grave disapproval and said: "You should have taken me into your confidence sooner, my dear comrade. We are late; we have lost valuable time. If this young prince has—whose father I knew in Vienna, and his mother, she was a Princess de Gauffremont—if Prince Stanislas has really been here, and if he has fallen among thieves in the way you suggest, I fear the thing has gone too far. He is probably beyond our help."

"Killed? Murdered?" I asked bluntly.

whether alive or side of "

He was not found, obevertheless. But a day or two lates the baron sent for me, and said they had alid hands upon the two rogues, Plepus and Delis Croce.

"They are both in Algiers, known to and identified by the police. No doubt they await your arrival with the magot, the great prize for which they have angled so cleverly. Now we shall arrest them. I am writing to beg that this be done at once, for by interrogation they may be got to confess what they have done with the prince—at least, when in custody they cannot carry out their pregram. They will not be silenced by the payments they demand, but they cannot very well communicate with the press."

This news in a measure ended my mission, which did not extend beyond laying bare and neutralizing a clever attempt at extortion. But I could not rest satisfied with that—I had still to fulfill a duty to my employer. I must unrayed the more serious mystery of the prince's disappearance. employer. I must unravel the more serious mystery of the prince's disappearance. So I prepared to return without delay to Algiers and assist, so far as I might be permitted, in the examination of the con-

insists upon the money being sent out, and every stipulation fulfilled to the letter. It drives him wild, the idea of a Medea posted as a cheat through Europe," answered Brightsmith.

"I don't say refuse. But, at least, be certain that the case is clear. There should be time to settle that question between the special probably beyond our help."

"Killed? Murdered?" I asked bluntly. He shrugged his shoulders.

"It is a poor confession to make, but out here, in thece wilds, such things have been. Strange things. The strangest is, perhaps, this story. Frankly, monsieur, I hardly credit it. It fails at the very beginning. Then luck interposed in my favor, and in no profession does the action of blind chance go further than in that of the detective. The strange fact has been proven again and again, and might be illustrated

spirators.



IT WAS PRINCE STANISLAS DE MEDEA.

now and November 23. I should like to look into it, on the spot, at once."

"At Biskra?"

"Certainly. There is time, I believe, for me to pay a visit to Biskra, to make inquiries, hear all about this De Fivas and Mirabel and the rest. Above all, to see the young prince and hear his own version."

"He has given it here," said old Black, hitting the confession with his knuckles as it lay upon the table.

t lay upon the table.
"He is said to have given it there. That may be a forgery. The signature, the official stamp of the notary, both might have been obtained by some nefarious dodge. The young prince may be under ecercion."

"My dear Major Macnaghten-Innes," broke in Black impatiently for one so re-

broke in Black, impatiently for one so se-date and stolid, "in my experience, an ounce of fact is worth a shipload of conjecture. I think that the safest course is to send the money—exchange it for the confession. Let us carry out the contract. That, moreover, in fact, is what our client wishes—silent compliance and no

Brightsmith, having fuller confidence in Brightsmith, having fuller confidence in my skill, took my view, and after much debate it was decided that Prince Casimir should be consuited. He came up to Gresham street, a rather limp old gentleman, to whom this was a crowning bitterness in a life of disappointment, and we had some difficulty in persuading him to the bolder course. It was the money that settled it. He was not rich, and would have been glad to save the \$1,300 blackmail.

Having arranged that the sum in question should await my orders at Cook's bank in Algiers, I left London for Biskra on November 2, and, taking the most expeditious route, that via Marseilles and Philipville, reached the desert town on the evening of the third day, November 5. Allowing three clear days for the return journey to Algiers where it my invented. journey to Algiers, where, if my inquiry failed, I must be on the evening of No-vember 22, I had just sixteen days before

Biskra owns several hotels, but I chose that which had been named in the letter from MM. de Fivas and Mirabel, believing I should be safest in the heart of the en emy's country. As I had my guns with me, and proposed to call upon both the French commandant and the kaid, or Arab governor, as an English sportsman, eager to hunt all kinds of game, I hoped to escape importunate curiosity. In support of this character I rode out twice with the kaid's falcons and spent a night in the

desert under the Aures mountains.

At the same time I prosecuted my inquiries with the utmost cautien. If it got wind that an agent from Prince Casi-mir was in Biskra my mission might fail mir was in Biskra my mission might fail at the very outset, and the worst would happen. I was satisfied the first day to walk through the Place de la Saharz, where I did actually find the brass plate of "La Ramie, Notary," at the door of his office or etude. I ascertained, too, that a club called the "Cercie el Salahin," existed, and that it was not difficult to gain

But as yet I could hear of no "De Fivas," no "Mirabel." There were no such persons residing at the Hotel des Zibaus, the very place from which they wrote making the demands! Of course, people might, and do, make use of an address that is berrowed or fictitious, yet there was comfort in the thought that these high-toned gentlemen were not persons very well

Again, I could not find that any prince, certainly no Prince Stanislas de Medea, had recently sojourned in Biskra. This was also satisfactory so far as it went; yet I could recently sojourned in Biskra. This was also satisfactory, so far as it went; yet I could not set much store by it, for princes of all categories have a fondness for incognito and there might be good reasons why Prince Stanislas should pass under a smaller and assumed name. I had his photograph with me, reputed a good likeness, and I always carried it about with me, hoping that I might run up against the original in some odd corner. But not only did I never meet him, but I could hear of no one answering to his description at any of the hotels.

My first substantial move was made when I was admitted as a member of the El Sala-hin Club I at once examined the list, but locked in vain for the names "De Fivas" and "Mirabel." They were not members

locked in vain for the names "De Fivas" and "Mirabel." They were not members of the club, that was clear.

This, to my mind, knocked the bottom out of the whole story. If a gambling scandal had occurred in the club, it would surely have been dealt with by members, not cutsiders; certainly not by such outsiders, shadowy, obscure personages, of whom, after five days' inquiry, I could hear nothing in Biskra. But there was still stronger reason to doubt the story. Now that I was a member I was in a position to ask, cautiously, about the case.

ber I was in a position to ask, cautiously, about the case.

No one had heard of it at all. It was pure invention: there had been no cheating, no Prince Stanislas in the club.

This conclusion relieved me of all anxiety with respect to the negotiations. The blackmailers were not to be greatly dreaded: their plot was thin and commonplace: their threats might be disregarded, and the money must assuredly not be paid.

But I found myself in the presence of a much more serious question. It was perfectly clear to me that somethink had happened to the young prince. No plot of this kind could have been set on foot without his being actively or passively concerned in it. He was a party to it, whether as a victim or tool or prime mover. For a moment in it. He was a party to it, whether as a victim or tool or prime mover. For a moment I wondered whether it was the last. Had this young scapegrace sought thus to mulet a father not too liberal with his sup-

No. I could not bring myself to believe this quite. It was so much more likely that he had fallen a prey to some artful villains who by some means or other had recog-nized him in B skra. penetrated his incognito and turned their knowledge to serve their own negarious ends

and turned their knowledge to serve their own nefarious ends.

This impolied foul play of the worst kind. They might even have made away with him in this far-off semi-barbarous land; at least, they could hold him sequestrated somewhere, a close prisoner, until they had achieved their purpose—the extortion of hush money for a social offense that only existed in their own evil minds.

I saw now that it was my bounden duty to apply to the authorities. The police at Biskra were semi-military in character, and under the orders of the commandant, a colonel of Spahis, Baron d'Hautrine by

las has ever been in Biskra. I question that, even."
"Would you have known?"

recorded among the arrivals at Biskra, be-lieve me; I should have heard."
"But if he was incognito, for reasons of

"We will have the registers. Let us see if there is any one like him on the lists. But you tell me you have yourself inquired at the hotels. I fear this will lead us ro further."

The lists were brought, but, as the baron prophesied, they told us nothing.

"No," he said, "I see only one spot of firm ground anywhere, a point from which possibly we may travel in the right direction."

tion."
"The notary public?"
"Exactly, M. La Ramie is a real, tangible fact—the only notary public in Biskra. I know him personally a little, by reputation still better, as an honorable, straightforward functionary, who would hardly lend himself to anything underhand. French notaries, as a rule, bear a deservedly high character. We had better see M. La Ramie. He can, at least, tell you the truth about the confession. A record of the copy, made and attested, will be kept in his office, if it ever was made, which I doubt."

We walked down without delay to the Place de la Sahara, and were shown in at once. All doors opened before the commandant of the garrison.

M. La Ramie, an aged man, who was in slippers and wore a black skull cap, was most courteous and obliging, prepared to give us any information in his

pared to give us any information in his power. But he knew nothing of a con-fession made by Prince Stanislas de Medea. Nothing of the sort had been brought to Then I laid the copy before him, asking

"The seal, yes. The signature, no. The first has been stolen, I know by whom the second forged—undoubtedly forged, by the same coquin, voleur, escroc, sacripant faineant." The staid old notary grew purple with rage as he rolled out abusive epithets, then paled sudderly with another emotion, alarm and misgiving. "He will ruin me yet, disgrace ne utterly, for who shall say where his abstractions, his mis-use of my confidence will cease?"
"Was he one of your clerks?" asked the

"My first clerk, Picpus, whom I drove cut of my etude some two months back for flagrant misconduct. Liar, rogue, thief, gambler, Greek, he wasted his substance and mine in every low hell, at the roulette tables in the market place, in the dancing dens of the Ouled Nail."

coast, to Algiers or to Constantine, and again that he was lurking somewhere near. He was seen at Sidi Okba, drunk in the bazaar, and covered with files. Another said he had gone on to Touggourt, and meant to go over to the-

"I do not believe myself that he has left Biskra-neither he nor his fast friend and el Salahin."

"This Della Croce," my frierd the colonel told me as we walked away from the notary's, "is probably at the bottom of this business. He was once in a good position, had money, and, I believe, rank—Della Croce is not his real name—but he lest it all at play. When he was bank-rupt in cash, and almost in character, he was brought out here this last season to act as croupier at the Casino, just to keep him from starvation. I heard of him I lim from starvation. I heard of nim, I never saw him, fcr, as you will understand, I do not frequent those places; heard of him as a man with a history, a man who had been in good, in the best society, knew men and cities, but had sunk into a

have not tried our best to clear up that. There shall be no imputation of foul play

"Would you have known?"
"As a matter of course I think he would have come to me; I think he would have allowed me to show him some attention. In any case, the hotel registers—you know our French system?—would certainly have told me. No Prince de Medea has been

kempt locks and grimy face, I recognized him beyond all question as the original of the photograph I now held in my hand.

if that was not his office seal, his signa

"What became of him?"
"I heard that he had gone down to the

bcon companion, the croupter of the Cercle

"Della Croce?" quickly asked Baron d'Hautrive, and I also pricked up my ears at the mention of the club. We had struck another clue.

"This Della Croce," my friend the col-

knew men and cities, but had sunk into a mere adventurer, a vaurien and chevalier d'industrie. It is possible that he knew the prince by sight, had met him or heard of him in Europe, and when he came up here—if he ever came—"
"Which is as good as proved," I put in.
"Not to my satisfaction. You stick to your point, however; it is like you English. But will you explain why no one, none of us at any rate, has met him or heard of him? Biskra is a small place. Why are him? Biskra is a small place. Why are there no traces of him?"
"That is the darkest part of the business,

"You shall not say, monsieur, that we

now and November 23. I should like to We do not even know that Prince Stanis-

caravanseral.

I drew near, amused, as I saw the youth snatch up a water bucket, the girl hur-riedly resume her task of shredding cab-bages in the pot-a-feu, while the woman mistress or mother, probably both—called one an idle vagabond and the other a shameless minx.

Then I caught the lad's face and was held instantly spellbound.

It was undcubtedly Prince Stanislas de Medea. his own?"
"We will have the registers. Let us For all his ragged, dusty clothes, his ill-

your father; he fears that you are dead; he almost wishes it, for by some mad folly you have nearly brought an indelible stain

Out of this the whole plot had grown.
It originated, no doubt, with Della Croce;
but it must have been aided and developed but it must have been aided and developed by the notary's clerk. But my task was not quite ended yet. I had extreme difficulty in weaning Prince Stanislas from the inamorata. He refused at first point blank to leave the van. It was not until I took these good folk—true Bohemians, yet in their way honorable, fair-dealing Biscayans—into my confidence

that I succeeded in getting him away.

The mother, with her strong, harsh voice, clinched the matter at once.

"He could not marry her. That would not be suitable. Anything else—merci, monsleur; trop d'honneur!" I believe Yvette eventually married a founier (pay sergeant) in the Zouaves, and was handsomely dowered by Prince Cas-

As for Prince Stanislas, he went down like a lamb to Algiers, where I left him to bear witness against the rogues who had tried to ruin him, and I returned home.

scayans-into my confidence

Machine Loading on Docks. From the Engineering Magazine

her and press his still unrequited suit.

Della Croce must have seen him when passing through Biskra. Prince Stanislas

remembered the man, had met him one day in the bastar, and had some difficulty in

In the matter of cost of operating wharf plants it is not to be understood that the same degree of economy which can be reached in the handling of a particular commodity in large bulk, such as coal, or grain, or ore, can be attained with miscellaneous cargoes; the difference in cost per ton may be enormous. For instance, there are plants in successful operation at Charleston and other places, for unloading sulphur, barytes and other bulk stuff, at a cost of less than 2 cents per ton, including the entire movement from the vessel's hold to the storage bins, several hundred feet away from the wharf, and thence through chutes to the hold and wharf. It is in the methods of dealing with general cargoes that the greatest field for improvement exists, this is not a stevedore's, but an engineer's prob-lem, and it embraces things other than the actual placing of the goods; it involves their sorting and distribution, and must be adaptable to all sorts and conditions of

freight.

Coal can be handled very cheaply; under certain conditions hard coal can be put into a vessel for less than one cent per ton; but the best performance in New York harbor in coaling a ship at the wharf used for miscellaneous traffic costs from 20 to 25 cents per ton. A fostune awaits the inventor who can devise a practical and economical mechanical means of loading steamer coal in the condition in which it cames to market—a misture of large lumps and fine dust and all intermediate sizes and shapes.

THE WONDERS OF PALMISTRY.





Planisphere of the Heavers-showing the Positions of the Principal Stars which are above the Horizon November 6, at 9 P.M.

from Touggourt and El Wayla, the farthest confines of the French territory.

It was of the same character as those I had seen in the far east, a great square inclosure, the center filled with refuse and garbage, among which stood the camels, horses and other animals, while on the four sides were low doors opening upon the travelers' rooms.

A little on one side was a new arrivalone of those old-fashioned hooded vans seldom seen out of France, and only there in out-of-the-way districts remote from the Stars.

OF THE LOST PLEIAD

a number of promising-looking coits stood around tethered by their fetlocks, and an old man in blue blouse and sabots was giving them water. Suddenly I saw him look toward the back of the van, give a low, shrill whistle, and whisper: The Annual Recurrence of the Me-"Gare! La patronne. Et patiti-et pateoric Shower.

TO LOCATE THE PLANETS

Written for The Evening Star.

IGHT STARS OF the first magnitude will be above the porizon at 9 o'clock this evening. In the northeast may be seen Capella, the Goat, the principal star in Auriga, now from its favorable position the brightest star visible; somewhat lower, in the east, is Aldebaran, the Bull's Eye, a reddish star, at one corner of the V-shaped

cluster of the Hyades; below this and you have nearly brought an indelible stain upon an ancient name!"

He had meant, I saw clearly, to deny his identity, but as I went on his eyes filled with tears, and he stammered out:

"I do not understand: I have done nothing very wrong. I love her to distraction—"
Then I led him straight out of the including who niet us thus arm-in-arm, took the princely stable boy to my hotel, and heard all he had to tell.

There was nothing very new in his story. He had been wandering up from the coast intognito, meaning to seek adventure in the farthest limits, when he had fallen in the f parely above the horizon is Betelgeuse (pro-

not particularly striking as a constella-tion, and interesting chiefly for its variable star Mira; Pegasus, the Winged Horse, marked by the great square, which at 9 o'clock has just crossed the meridian and is nearly overhead; the Swan (Cygnus), or Northern Cross, in mid-heavens in the northwest, easily recognized from the crosslike arrangement of its five or brighter stars; Cassiopeia, now seated her most commanding position, directly above the Pole Star; Perseus, in mid-heav-ens in the northeast, containing two stars of the second magnitude, one of which is the variable star Algol, in the Head of Methe variable star Algol, in the Head of Medusa, carried by Perseus in his left hand. Andromeda, marked by three stars of the second magnitude, which, together with the star in the breast of Perseus, form the handle of a large dipper-shaped figure, of which the Square of Pegasus is the bowl, the star in the Maiden's Head forming one corner of the Square; and Aries, Taurus and Auriga, which together fill a good portion of the eastern quadrant of the neavens.

# The Lost Pleiad.

One of the most interesting of the objects which we have before us as we face the east is the sparkling little cluster of the Pleiades. In Grecian fable the Pleiades were the daughters of Atlas and the ocean nymph, Pleione, whom Jupiter, to rescue them from Orion, changed into pigeons and placed among the stars. The conceit of the "Lost Pleiad"—who, some said, had wasted away with weeping over the fall of Troy, or, according to another account, had with-drawn her light from shame at having married a mortal—was in explanation of the fact that only six stars could be counted in the cluster, while there were seven daughters, and the earlier poets and astronomers had reckoned seven stars.

What became of the Lost Pleiad is still an unaswered question At the present

an unanswered question. At the present time but six stars can be seen in the clus-ter by eyes of only ordinary keenness. Yet just below the limit of ordinary vision there are several which have been seen by persons of extraordinary eyesight. Maest lin, the tutor of Kepler, counted fourteen Pleiads, and mapped eleven, before the in-vention of the telescope, and Miss Airy also saw fourteen and mapped twelve.

saw fourteen and mapped twelve.

The brightest Pleiad now is Alcyone, of the third magnitude. But there are reasons for thinking that this was not the brightest star in the cluster in the time of Ptolemy, and it is not improbable that others of these stars have changed in brilliancy in the course of time, and that the loss of the Pleiad was an actual case of diminution in splendor. Prof. E. C. Pick. loss of the Pleiad was an actual case of diminution in splendor. Prof. E. C. Pickering has picked out the star now known as Pleione—for both Atlas and Pleione have been placed by astronomers in the cluster by the side of their daughters—as very likely to be the star in question. The star has a peculiar spectrum—one which indicates that the star is largely gaseous, and therefore very likely to be subject to variation in brightness.

### A Numerous Cluster. This little cluster, which so much en-

gaged the attention of ancient star gazers. has proved to be the object of especial interest for modern astronomers. Photography has shown not only that it contains upward of 3,000 stars—some of the latest photographs are said to show, within limits which are properly to be assigned to the cluster, over 6,000 stars—but also that it is involved in an extensive nebula, which is especially condensed about the stars Alcyone, Merope, Electra and Maia, and forms a filmy background, somewhat curdled in appearance, for the whole of that part of the cluster seen with the naked eye. Furthermore, Prof. Barnard found, upon photographing the cluster and its surcundings with a portrait lens and with the long exposure of ten hours, that the entire surrounding region over a space equal in area to the bowl of the Great Dipper, is filled with more or less connected patches of faint nebulosity. There can be no question that the stars here are associated with this nebulous matter, are actually imbedded in it, and that they form a true and not merely an optical cluster. The Pletades may be regarded, then, as forming a separate department of the universe, so to speak, and this fact suggests several interesting questions, which cannot as yet be answered. Have these stars been formed by the partial condensation of this nebulous matter? Are they really suns, or are the cluster, over 6,000 stars-but also that

NOVEMBER HEAVENS
they stil! in that primitive condition which, on Prof. Lockyer's "Meteorite Theory," marks the incipient stage of sun life—are they simply condensing shoals of white-hot meteors? Again, it would be interesting to know how far away these stars are that we might form some idea of their size and of the actual dimensions of the system which they form. From rather more tain. and of the actual dimensions of the system which they form. From rather uncertain data it has been estimated that the distance of the Pleiades from us is not less than 250 "light years," or about twenty-five times that of Sirius. Assuming this to be the case—though really the estimate is little better than a random guess—the naked-eye stars of the cluster must be vastly superior in size to the sun, which at eastly superior in size to the sun, which at vastry superior in size to the sun, which at that distance would dwindle to a star of about the tenth magnitude. It would require a good three-inch telescope at the least to discover it. Alcyone must surpass it in actual splendor a thousand times. Figuring on the same basis, we can calculate that the size of the cluster, which is roughly glob-ular, is such that light requires seven years to speed across it from side to side. Were its central star in the place of the sun, the outermost stars of the globular portion of the cluster would be found nearly at the distance of Alpha Centauri, the sun's nearly statellar neighbor, while its outline. est stellar neighbor, while its outlying streamers would extend far beyond.

On the nights of the 13th, 14th and 15th of the month we may look for the annual recurrence of the November meteors-the Leonids, so called from the circumstance that the point from the direction of which they seem to shoot their "radiant" is in the constellation Leo. In 1899, according to the calculation of astronomers, a "shower" of these meteors is due-one of those grand and terrifying displays which this meteor system gives at intervals of thirty-three years, and experience has shown meteor system gives at intervals of thirty-three years, and experience has shown that in the year or two preceding the shower there is apt to be an unusually fine display, though the locality in which it will be seen, whether in the eastern or western hemisphere, cannot be predicted, nor the hours at which it will occur. This is true also of the "shower." Wheth-er we in America will witness it or it will

# Mira and Algol.

Cloudy weather has prevented any very recent observation of Mira by the writer. The star will doubtless be easily visible to the naked eye by the time that this is in print, and if true to its record it should increase in brilliancy until reaches a maximum, some time in December. The peculiarity of this "wonderful" star was described last month, and di rections for finding it were also given. Note that it lies nearly midway between Aldebaran and Fomalhaut, and at a distance from Menkar, to the right, about half as great as that of Menkar from Aldebaran. The star is of a decidedly reddish color.

A minimum of Algel convenient for characterists.

A minimum of Algol convenient for of serving will occur at 11 p.m. on the 9th, and another at 9 p.m. on the 12th. With the aid of the planisphere this star should

# The Planets.

All of the planets except Venus, Jupiter and Neptune are too near the sun to be of interest to naked-eye observers. Mcrcury will be in conjunction with the sun (superior) on the 7th. Uranus on the 21st and Saturn on the 25th.

Venus is still a morning star, about an hour and a half west of the sun, but her brilliancy is now less than one-tenth as great as in June last.

Jupiter is a brilliant morning star, about one nour and a quarter west of

Neptune, invisible to the naked eye, is in Taurus, at the point indicated on the

# NEW COINS.

A Rash Promise and a Wife's Little Scheme.

from the St. Louis Globe-Den cerat. He was standing on the rear platform of suburban car when the conductor handed him two new dimes in change for a quarter, having subtracted the fare. The passenger gazed at them in a meditative manner.

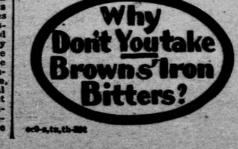
"Every time I see a new coin," he said, "it makes me think of the first year I was married. It wasn't so long ago, either," he said, reflectively. 'But, you know, my wife said I spent too much for drinks and cigars, and one day when she was with me and a clerk gave me a couple of new pieces in change, an idea came to her. "'Say, dear,' she said to me, 'give me all the new coins you get, will you, dear? It will even up what you spend for your

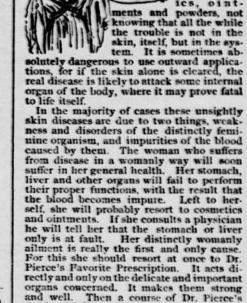
"And so I agreed. I promised faithfully to keep all rew coins and give them to her. I reckoned I wou'dn't get many, and I knew it would please her. It did. But it nearly made me a bankrupt. The first few days it was all right, but inside of a week I was afraid to offer any one anything bugger than a dime, for fear every coin I got back would be fresh from the mint. The druggist—I buy my cigars of him—would throw out two new quarters every time I bought half a dozen cigars and gave him a dollar. The grocer had such a marvelous lof of new pieces I made up my min1 he was running a subtreasury, and even the milkman would continue to give the a dollar's worth every time I paid him. I began to get suspicious, especially when I "And so I agreed. I promised faithfully

gan to get suspicious, especially when I took a check into the bank one day and the cashler says:

"Well, I suppose you wouldn't mind

ome silver!"
"'Not at all,' I said. "He gave me two rolls, each marked \$10. When I got home my wife opened them, and every one looked as new as if I'd made it myself. Of course, my wife confiscated





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the whole amount. The next day I went to the cashier.

"Say; look here.' I said, 'what do you mean by giving me all those new coins?'
"Well, he hemmed and hawed, and then "Well, he hemmed and hawed, and then he told me how my wife had come to him and told him my great fad was new money; how I'd read about the bacilli on money, and how he thought he was pleasing me.

"I didn't say a word to her, but that day I went around to all the tradespeople and found she had told them the same thing. I gave away about \$10 worth of cigars, told them I hated new money, and all that, and thereafter I always got the worst, most battered lot of change you ever saw. She don't know yet, but talk to me about woman not being a financier—well, if I was President, I'd make my wife Secretary of the Treasury.

### Vacations for Horses and Others. From Leslie's Weekly.

It was in Boston, naturally, that the idea originated, which has been in practical operation there during the past summer season, of giving the horses of the police department a regular annual vacation, the same as the men. Pastures have been secured in the suburban districts, where the horses are sent, in turn, for periods of two or three weeks together. They are unshed, turned loose in good pasturage, well statied at night, and receive their wages-a measure of grain-the same as when working. The animals enjoy themselves immensely, and the beneficial results are inmistakably apparent.

This is a praiseworthy movement, from every point of view, and ought to be generally encouraged. If work-horses have their vacations the system may be extended to take in various classes of human tollers who have not hitherto known the meanwho have not hitherto known the mean-ing of green fields and pastures new. It would be simply an ideal condition of things if vacations, long and frequent, could be made compulsory for certain self-advertising novelists, sensational preachers, nd masterly politic know, and would willingly permit to take a rest.

### English and American Universities. From the New York Tribune. It is certainly something of a tribute

to American educational institutions and scholars that when, some years ago, a graduate of Harvard went to Oxford and applied for admittance there to make a special study of Shakespeare for a year, he was told: "Go back to Harvard and Professor Child. They can teach you far more there than we can here." It seems, however, that this opinion had been expressed before, even at a time when Harvard and American colleges had not nearly attained their present standard, for the elder Ed-ward Everett, in a letter dated as far back as 1818, said, writing from Oxford: "I have been over two months in England, and am now visiting Oxford, having passed a week in Cambridge. There is more teaching and more learning in our American Cambridge than there is in both the English universities together, though between them they have four times our number of students."

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